CLAIMS

1. A system comprising:

at least two client nodes adapted to communicate with each other via an instant messaging utility;

an instant messaging server for supporting instant messages between the two client nodes; and

a second server for supporting video conferences between video conference participants, a video conference being initiated between video conference participants in response to an instant message transmitted between the at least two client nodes.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

3. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via cellular communication.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a computer.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a network gateway.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a video conferencing standard protocol.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via an ISDN standard protocol.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via an ATM standard protocol.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the instant message contains information related to communication modes of the participants to be used by the participants to participate in the video conference.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

11. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise cellular communication.

12. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a computer.

13. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a gateway.

14. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a video conferencing standard protocol.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ISDN standard protocol.

16. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ATM standard protocol.

17. The system of claim 1, further comprising a third server for processing information

related to the participants in the video conference to initiate the video conference.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein the third server receives the information from the instant message.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein the information is related to communication modes of the participants to be used by the participants to participate in the video conference.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

21. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise cellular communication.

22. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a computer.

23. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a gateway.

24. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a video conferencing standard protocol.

25. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ISDN standard protocol.

26. The system of claim 19, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ATM standard protocol.

27. The system of claim 1, wherein the second server is a network video conferencing server which supports video conferences using a network video conferencing protocol.

28. A communication method comprising:

providing at least two client nodes adapted to communicate with each other via an instant messaging utility;

providing an instant messaging server for supporting instant messages between the two client nodes; and

providing a second server for supporting video conferences between video conference participants, a video conference being initiated between video conference participants in response to an instant message transmitted between the at least two client nodes.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

30. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via cellular communication.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a computer.

32. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a network gateway.

33. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via a video conferencing standard protocol.

34. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants

participates in the video conference via an ISDN standard protocol.

35. The method of claim 28, wherein at least one of the video conference participants participates in the video conference via an ATM standard protocol.

36. The method of claim 28, wherein the instant message contains information related to communication modes of the participants to be used by the participants to participate in the video conference.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

38. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise cellular communication.

39. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a computer.

40. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a gateway.

41. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a video conferencing standard protocol.

42. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ISDN standard protocol.

43. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ATM standard protocol.

44. The method of claim 28, further comprising providing a third server for processing information related to the participants in the video conference to initiate the video conference.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein the third server receives the information from the instant message.

46. The method of claim 44, wherein the information is related to communication modes of the participants to be used by the participants to participate in the video conference.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

48. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise cellular communication.

49. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a computer.

50. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a gateway.

51. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via a video conferencing standard protocol.

52. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via an ISDN standard protocol.

53. The method of claim 46, wherein the communication modes comprise communication via

an ATM standard protocol.

54. The method of claim 28, wherein the second server is a network video conferencing server which supports video conferences using a network video conferencing protocol.